

Synthesis Essay Prompt Research Assignment—

Your task is primarily to conduct research on your topic while learning about how and why a research library functions. You will have already selected a topic to help focus your research, and your job is to select documents that represent a wide variety of academic sources as well as a wide variety of view-points concerning your topic.

By the end of the second day in the library, hopefully, you will have located and collected a minimum of six documents to work with next week. Here are some criteria for choosing your final six sources.

- One of your documents needs to be a *visual text* (i.e. a photograph, a piece of art, an advertisement, a political cartoon, a chart, a graph, a table, a map, etc.)
- One of your documents needs to be a *blog*—an internet based web-log. Please note however that only two of your source documents overall can be internet based. This does not include documents that were originally published as print documents that you printed off from an on-line database. This restriction is only limited to documents published to the internet as websites.
- One of your documents needs to come from a *scholarly journal*.
- One of your documents needs to come from a *newspaper article*—this may include hard news, feature, or editorial style articles.
- One of your documents needs to come from a *report* or piece of *legislation*—this may be a government document (local or national), a laboratory research report, etc. Look for a source that includes significant data and/or statistics concerning your topic, but also look for one that is digestible.
- Other than the internet restriction, your last document can come from anywhere. You may, for instance, choose to “double up” on documents from scholarly journals or newspaper articles, or you might choose to be creative and look for cultural sources like transcripts to television or radio shows, excerpts from speeches, sermons, group charters or mission statements, novels, movies, song lyrics, etc.

A few items to consider when selecting your documents:

1. Again, make sure your six documents represent the full-range of opinions on your topic.
2. Copy or print off the entire document—within reason. Digital copies are preferred because they are easier to manipulate. Ultimately you will only use excerpts from each document, but to begin with, you need the whole thing.
3. Write down all of the source information pertaining to your document! You will be required to properly cite your source.